

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 06871 151106Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 HA-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00
/064 W

-----053849 151109Z /13

O R 151025Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6587
INFO AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 6871

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, SHUM, ET, SO
SUBJ: MENGISTU STATEMENT ON CROSSING SOMALI BORDER

REF: STATE 298389; ADDIS ABABA 6844

1. WHEN MENGISTU MADE HIS STATEMENT ON NOT BEING OBJECTIVE
RPT OBJECTIVE TO CROSS ETHIOPIAN BORDER, CODEL IMMEDIATELY
ASKED FOR, AND CHAIRMAN GRANTED, PERMISSION TO QUOTE HIM IN
CODEL PRESS STATEMENT. BEFORE IT WAS SENT TO NAIROBI FOR
RELEASE TO JOURNALISTS, THIS STATEMENT WAS SHOWN TO ACTING
FOREIGN MINISTER, MOFA MADE FEW EDITORIAL SUGGESTIONS TO
OTHER PORTIONS OF TEXT, BUT LEFT MENGISTU QUOTE INTACT. HENCE,
THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT MENGISTU STANDS ON WHAT HE SAID.
WE CONSIDER FACT THAT FBIS REPORT DOES NOT CONTAIN SAME
QUOTE SIMPLY REFLECTS THAT ETHIOPIAN MEDIA INVARIABLY TAILOR
NEWS OF THIS KIND TO INCLUDE ONLY THAT MATERIAL WHICH IS DI-
RECTLY SELF-SERVING TO REVOLUTION AND WAR EFFORT.

2. AT SAME TIME, WHAT MENGISTU SAID IS STILL SUBJECT TO
VARYING INTERPRETATIONS, SINCE IT DOES NOT PRECLUDE TEMPORARY
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OCCUPATION OF SOME SOMALI TERRITORY BEFORE ETHIOPIANS HAVE
PUSHED SOMALIS OUT OF ALL AREAS OF OGADEN. AS RECENTLY AS
DEC 14, SOVIET AMBASSADOR REPEATED TO CHARGE HIS DOUBTS THAT
MENGISTU WOULD BE ABLE TO RESTRAIN MILITARY FROM RETALIATING
AGAINST SOMALI TERRITORY, ONCE TIDE HAD TURNED. RECENT RE-
PORTS OF EPMG BOMBING OF HARGEISA FURTHER REINFORCE LIKELI-
HOOD THAT SUCH AIR ACTIONS AT LEAST WILL CONTINUE TO CON-

STITUTE PART OF ETHIOPIAN TACTICS TO DISLODGE SOMALIS FROM
OCCUPIED REGIONS.

3. FOR THESE REASONS, EMBASSY IS NOT DISPOSED TO ACCEPT
MENGISTU'S STATEMENT AS LAST WORD ON QUESTION OF CROSSING
SOMALI BORDERS, ALTHOUGH HE ALSO MADE IT CLEAR, BY REFERENCE
TO "NOT REPEATING SAME MISTAKE SOMALIS MADE," THAT HE IS
SENSITIVE TO POTENTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS OF MOVING INTO SOMALIA
UPON ETHIOPIA'S GENERALLY ACCEPTED POSITION AS BEING VICTIM
OF AGGRESSION.
MATHERON

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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 15-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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